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KAMMEIER FAMILY IN AMERICA

by

Ernst C. Kammeier

1950

Allen County Public Library
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

Life story of the Kammein family here in America.

There are times in the life of every one when one thinks and wonders who our ancestors were, what their occupation was, what part of the world they came from and why they came to America.

For those that come after us and others that may be interested and wish to keep a record of the family and its pioneer days and later, this brief history is written at this time.

Many things recorded here was told by my parents grand parents and others as it is remembered by me

E. C. K.

1950

There is very little known by those now living in America of the history of the Hammerich family prior to the time that they immigrated to America.

Henry Hammerich the I, as we will call him was born about the year 1805 in the province of Prussia, Germany

His parents were agriculturists and he followed the same occupation

Germany became quite thickly populated and the farms were small, barely large enough to make a fair living.

What did the story they had heard of the great opportunities for young men in the United States, the land that could be bought cheaply, religous freedom,

adventure and so forth. induced a large number of Germans to immigrate to America at that time.

So did Henry Kammeier decide to cast his lot with the emmigrants and came to America in the year 1842 at about the age of 37.

There were no steamboats crossing the Atlantic Ocean in five or six days at that time as they are doing now, so the journey was made on a sail ship vessel. It took six weeks to cross the Atlantic ocean on a sail boat at that time.

The family consisted of five persons, father, mother and three children. Henry II aged nine. He was born in 1833. Frederick, seven

born 1835, and Sophie five. born 1837. Sophie was later married to Christian Baade.

They landed in New York, from there to Toledo Ohio the journey west was made by railroad, and from Toledo to Ft. Wayne Ind on a canal boat on the Erie Canal.

The destination of the Hammein family was Adams County Ind about fifteen miles south of Ft. Wayne. There was a settlement of germans in that part of the county of people that had come from the same locality in Germany where the Hammein family had come from.

The last part of the journey from Ft Wayne to Adams County was made by ox cart. And so after so many weeks of travel the family arrived safely at their destination, welcomed by their friends who had previously come to America

After being in America about two weeks, misfortune befel the family. The father became sick and died at about the age of thirty seven years.

That surely was a hard blow for the mother who was left alone with these little children in a strange country, but fortunately, among good friends and neighbors who helped them as best they could.

Henry Kammeir the I
was buried on the City
Cemetery on Broadway, which
was later converted into a
park and is called McCulloch
Park in honor of Hugh McCulloch,
a prominent citizen and
~~founder~~ banker of Ft Wayn,
and who was Secretary of
the Treasury of the United
States under President Lincoln,
and devised and inaugrated
the modern banking
system in the United States.

When the cemetery was
conveated into a city park
about the year 1885, quite
a number of bodies were
removed to other burial
grounds but that of Henry
Kammeir was not disturbed
and is still ~~at~~ resting there.
The grave is located in the
south west corner of the park

near Broadway under a large elm tree.

Mrs. Hammein remained living in Adams County for about a year when she was married again to Henry Korte who was born in the year 1819 in Hanover Germany.

The family moved to Allen County Ind, shortly and bought a farm about two miles south of Ft. Wayne in the year 1843. Mr. Korte remained living on this farm until he died in the year 1891.

The farm remained in the ~~Hammein~~ Korte family until about the year 1920. when the city grew out to it was acquired by a real estate firm and plotted into city lots and de-

veloped into a high class residential district called Southwood Park. It is part of the southwood park addition located west of the Old Mill Road. Part of the farm is included in Foster Park and the Municipal Golf Course.

Two more children were born to the Yoders. Christian and a daughter Minnie who was later married to Carl Kruse.

The distance from the old home in Adams county to the new one near Ft. Wayne was about fifteen miles. The journey to the new home was made by ox cart on which their very few household goods were packed. They had a few cattle and pigs and they were driven the fifteen miles distance on foot.

The mother and children took turns about driving them

It took from early morning till late at night to travel the distance. There were no Automobiles nor paved roads at that time

My father often would relate how they would economize in those pioneer days in order to save and make headway, even though they perhaps could afford it better.

The first thing they did when they arrived at their new home was to take a pig to town and trade it for a sack of flour and corn meal. Instead of coffee they would roast corn and ~~grind~~ grind it and

make corn coffee

In plaw of coal oil lamps they would use oil wicks. They ~~would~~ looked something liske this . I saw one of thoes oil wick holders on grandfathers Wortes home when I was about 6 years old.

They also used many tallow candles. The candles were home made from tallow, which they would save when they would butcher a cow to get meat for their own use. I too saw my mother make tallow candles from cow tallow for our own use.

The plowing and haulin and so forth was done with oxen in plaw of horses. The oxen had to be driven

on with a long stick otherwise they would not get any where because they were lazy and would stop to eat grass.

The driving was usually done by the mother or the children.

Truly the life of the pioneer could not have been a pleasant one as we see it today. Although they seemed more happy, satisfied and contented than the people are today with all the conveniences they are enjoying in these days.

When my father Henry Hammond (II) was about twenty years of age he found employment on a canal boat on the Wabash & Erie Canal. The length of the canal was

from Toledo Ohio to Lafayette Ind.

There was a large amount of grain and merchandise shipped by canal to eastern markets in those days.

The boats were drawn by mules and horses that had to be driven along on a tow path which was built on the edge of the canal.

A rope was fastened to the boat and brought to the shore. The mules and horses were hitched to the rope and in that way the boat was towed the entire length of the canal night and day, rain or shine

The canal was abandoned in 1881 when the Nickle

Plate railroad was built thru Ft Wayne. The right of the way of the canal was used by the railroad as a road bed. thru Ft Wayne. Traces of the canal can be seen East and West of Ft Wayne.

Henry Hammerin II was bornd May 15 1833 in Hanover Germany. He was married ~~to~~ in 1856 to Louise Prange, daughter of Henry Prange who lived in Germany at that time.

She came to America in 1850 at the age of 18 years She worked as house maid for wealthy people in Ft. Wayne before she was married.

A few years later

her parents also came to America on her recommendation and settled on a farm four miles west of Ft Wayne on Lusbury Rd. The grandson Fred Petznick and Great grandson Fred are living on the farm at this time.

Henry Prange had six children.—

Louise - married to Henry Hammen
Hanna - " to Ernest Bradtmiller
Christina - " " Sudrick Mochlenbrock
Minna - " " Sudrick Wiebke
Henry - " " Minno Muhlenbrink
Sophia - " " Sudrick Thiele

Henry remained on the ~~farm~~ homestead until he died. His son and grandson are living on the farm at this time.

After the Hammers (II)
were married they lived
in Ft Wayne a year or two.
Then they bought a farm
four miles west of Ft Wayne
on the Liesburg Road.

The road from Ft Wayne
to the farm was not much
more than a crooked
track through a forest.
Later on the crooked trail
was established as a public
highway with out it be-
ing surveyed in a straight
road but followed the
first crooked trail which
perhaps the Indians had
first used as a a trail
That is the reason why
the Liesburg road is still
a crooked road from end
to end.

The most urgent thing
the Hammers had to

on their new farm was to cut away the brush and timber for clear space to plant small crops and garden truck and build a house.

The house consisted of a two room frame cottage about sixteen by thirty five with a stair way leading up to the attic on the second floor, which was not plastered, only a floor and roof over it, which served as sleeping quarters for the children.

This first house is still standing as it was built more than 90 years ago. A few years later another room was added to the house and served as a bed room. This three room house served as a residence for a family

of ten persons, father
mother and eight children.

In 1878 a large eight
room brick house was
built to take the place
of the old one. The outside
of the house is just as it
was built more than
70 years ago although the
inside was remodled with
all the latest conveniences
The grandson Albert, son
of William Hammeir lives
in the house at this time.

In those days it
required a lot of hard work
for the pioneers to make
headway. The main job
was to clear the ground
of timber and brush and
make it suitable for
cultivation. The trees
were cut down and left
lay for a while to dry.

then they were cut into logs so they rolled on a pile and burnt because there was very little demand for timber or wood in those days.

Later on as Ft. Wayne grew into a good sized town there became a good market for lumber and stove wood, also for hay, corn and all other products of farm

In winter my father would drive to town most every day when the mud roads were passable, with a load of wood, hay, grain and other farm products which the boys and girls too, cut the wood and did the other work that had to be done on the farm.

The wood was cut into four foot lengths called cord

wood, then the city people had to cut it into shorter pieces to fit their stove. No gas and very little coal was used for heating and cooking purposes at that time.

The new ground was rich and very productive in hay, grain and other farm products so my father was quite prosperous and in time acquired three hundred acres of land before he retired at the age of sixty five years of age, when he turned the farms over to his sons to follow in his footsteps.

Henry Hammeier II lived a retired life on the homestead until he reached the age of seventy four. He died in the year 1907 and was buried in the Concordia Lutheran Cemetary in Ft. Wayne, Ind

Mother Hammeier died in

the year 1894 at the age of sixty-two. She lost her life through an accident on the public highway when a team of horses became frightened on West Main St. in Ft. Wayne and ran against a telegraph pole. She was thrown out of the wagon onto the hard pavement, breaking her neck and she died instantly. She too was buried in the Concordia Cemetary.

There were eight children in the Kammeier family, three girls and five boys.

The eldest Louise Kammeier was born in Oct. 1857. She was married to Frederick Pohlmeyer.

They lived in Ft. Wayne all their married life. Eleven children were born to them. Five girls and six boys, Henry, Louise, Fred, Emma, William,

Pauline, Otto, Helen, Lillian, Martin and Erwin

Henry Kammeier III was born in Oct 1859. He died in 1880 at the age of twenty one.

Minnie Kammeier was born Sept 1861. She died in 1895. She was married to Carl Wiese. They lived on a farm in Southern Ill. for about five years. Then they came back to Allen Co. Ind. and lived on a farm about two miles east of New Haven. Five children were born to them Otto, Christ, Clara, and Pauline. One child died when the lived in Ill. at about the age of one year.

Pauline Kammeier was born in Feb. 1864. She was married to Henry Meyer. One child was born to them, Otto. Mrs. Meyer died in 1924. She died from injuries received in an

accident on the public highway. The horse Mr. Meyer was driving became frightened by a passing automobile. She was thrown out of the wagon and was hurt and died from a fractured skull. ~~Fah~~ The Meyers lived on a farm on the Leesburg Road all their married life.

Fred Hammeer was born on Feb. 28, 1866. He was married to ~~Fr~~ Louie Rodenbeck. They lived on a farm all their life. Three children were born to them, Alma, Elsie and Adolph.

William Hammeer was born in 1868. He was to married to Minnie Linnemeyer. They lived on the homested farm all their married life. Willian too, lost his life through an accident. The team of horses he was using to cut hay in a field became frightened and

ran away, throwing him
off of the machine and injuring
him and died shortly after.
Four children were born to
them, Ida, Albert, Linda and
Ora. Ora died as a very young
child.

Christ Kammerer was
born Aug 25, 1872. He was
married to Matilda Zollinger
They lived on a farm on the
Bass Rd. all their married life
Three children were born to
them, Esther, Selma and Oscar.

The following about myself in more detail is principly for the benefit and information for my own children and grandchildren and others that may be interested in my own family and myself.

I Ernest C. Hammiss was born Apr. 3, 1870. The seventh in a family of eight children

My boyhood days and youth was spent on a farm which is called the old home stead on which brother William lived all his life.

My memory often wanders back to the old homestead with fondest regard, because the years I spent at home on the farm were of the most enjoyable I can recall. It was one of the care free periods that come in every ones life.

Life on the farm is not so lonesome and monotanous as one would think and imagin it to be

In the spring time we children would go into the woods and meadows and gather violets and other wild flowers and bring them home to Mother. We would go to the field with father or the older brothers and watch them plow, sow, plant and cultivate the crops.

We would roam around in the woods and watch the birds, squirks and other wild life. In the fall we would gather hickory nuts, hazel and walnuts and enjoy eating them during the long winter months.

When the first snow would fall we would go out and find rabbit tracks. Then we would run the rabbit down into a hollow log or wood pile and capture him and proudly take him home.

We would go & play and skate on the ice on the nearby ponds of which there were quite a number in those days.

Sunday morning as many as could find room on a three seated spring wagon, we would go to the Emmanuel Luth. Church in Ft. Wayne.

I was brought up in the Luth. faith and was baptized and confirmed in Emmanuel Lutheran church as were all my brothers & sisters.

We attended the German Luth. School in Washington Township, on the Leesburg Rd about two blocks east of the home stead. The old school house is still standing but a few rooms were added to it to make it suitable for a residence

The school was a one room building attended by about forty children. Seven grades were taught

by one teacher. All subjects were taught in the german language except for one hour each day the advanced classes would be instructed in reading, writing and spelling in the english language.

After graduating from the seventh grade in the parochial school, I attended the public school for one year and graduated from the eighth grade at the age of 14 years.

Eight grades was considered a general education in those days. Every grade above the eighth was considered a higher education which very few children among the common people received in those days.

After my school days I worked on my fathers farm until I was eighteen years of age.

There were four boys on at home on the farm and not enough work for all of them so I was

given the first opportunity of getting work in town.

My first work in the City was delivery man for the grocery ~~business~~ firm of Kayser & Boode, corner Jeff. St and Broadway

The store is still in existance in the same location altho. under different management. I was employd there for 4 years. 1888 to 1892.

In 1892 I found employment at Ely, Dittoe Fancy grocery. It was known as "Fancy grocery" because they catered to the rich and so called better class of people.

The average pay for a clerk at that time was twelve dollars a week and the store kept open for business until 8 ~~o'clock~~ o'clok and Sat. nights until 10. I ~~was~~ worked for the firm 13 years.

In order to earn more money and have less working hrs. I decided to try and get into the Postal servic

as a letter carrier. I took the Civil Service examination and passed. I was appointed a city letter carrier Sept 1 1905.

There were 30 letter carriers at that time, whereas there are 140 at this time, 1950.

Many changes have taken place in the Postal Service in the past 40 yrs.

The salary of a carrier in 1905 was $850 & which was increased at intervals to $1200, $1800, $2100 up to 3800 at this time.

Other improvements were, ten days sick leave per year with full pay, retirement at age of 65 or at 63 if one has served thirty years with 12 to 18 hundred dollars retirement pay per year, depending on the length of time one has served.

I was retired in the year 1935 after serving 30 yrs in the postal service.

I was married June 10, 1896 to Minnie Rodenbeck. She departed from this life Dec. 18, 1946 at the age of 73. She was born in Perry Township Allen Co., Ind.

We lived in our own home at 1405 Fairfield until we built our present home at 926 Kinsmoor Ave.

We were blessed with four children Edna born Sept 23, 1897 She was married to Fred Wilbur of Ft Wayne. Three children were born to them, Elaine, Robert, and Doris Ann

Hilda was born July 2, 1901. She was married to Harry Koenig Dec 1, 1923. Three children were born to them Kenneth, James and Jack.

Clarence was born Jan 26 1906 He was married to Beatrice Ferriby of Mich. Two children were born to them Frederick and Susan.

Dorothy was born Mar. 9, 1916. She died Mar 10, 1916

That brings the history of the Kammeier family down from the time that Henry Kammeier I was born about the yr. 1805 to the present time 1950 a span of about 145 yrs.

Truly the Kammeier family here in Amer. has lived int one of the most interesting and eventful periods in the world's history when one considers the wonderful changes and inventions that have been made in the past 100 yrs.

The telephone, electric light, furnace, bicycle, automobile, airplane, phonograph, radio, motion pictures and many other useful things were all invented in my life time of 80 yrs.

No doubt mans mind, ambitions ~~and~~ and genious will keep on inventing new things, so that the next eighty yrs. may be just as interesting and

eventful as the past has been.

May others that come after us continue this story where I have ended for the information and benifit of future generation to come.

And may they prospur, be happy and contended.

Ernst C. Kammeier.

June 30 1950

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